

need, and I want to lead this community with something good." When Vandalia Mayor Sandra Leidner was asked about Marilyn she said, "She's the epitome of volunteerism. I think she sets a fine example for others." It is great to see such determination and willingness to lend a hand to the community. Marilyn is a perfect example of not only a community volunteer but also a community leader.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 308, due to travel restrictions, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

#### OPEN LETTER FROM COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CALLS ON SIKHS TO STOP SUPPORTING INDIAN TYRANNY

#### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 1999*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the conflict in Kashmir has been in the news a lot lately. The conflict stemmed from an attack on the Kashmiri freedom fighters in Kargil. While it looks as if the conflict may be receding, there is still fighting. The Sikhs in Punjab are afraid that it will spread to Punjab, Khalistan. The fighting will continue as long as India uses force to suppress the freedom movements of South Asia.

While the fighting was at its height, the Council of Khalistan, which leads the Sikh freedom struggle, issued an open letter on the situation. The letter told Sikh troops that if they died for India, they would die as mercenaries, but if they died for Sikh freedom, they would die as martyrs. It urged them to go home and join the struggle to liberate Khalistan.

In the letter, the Council of Khalistan pointed out that an Indian colonel said that the troops were "dying like dogs" and that 60 percent of the soldiers killed were Sikhs. This is typical of India's strategy to keep the minority nations of South Asia within their artificial borders. They send draftees from one minority to kill another. They don't put Hindu lives at risk. "Are you willing to die for a country that practices a policy of mass cremations against our Sikh brothers and sisters, a policy the Indian Supreme Court called, 'worse than a genocide'?" said the letter.

It is essential that we help bring real peace to South Asia. Both India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, and we must do what we can to prevent these weapons from being used. So far, American involvement in the situation has been mainly to lean on Pakistan to bring an end to the conflict. But it is only India that can end the conflict. Only when India stops its efforts to repress the freedom movements can the conflict in South Asia end.

India is anti-American and has tried to organize a security alliance against the United States, and in May the Foreign Minister orga-

nized and led a meeting with Cuba, China, Russia, Serbia, Iraq, and Libya "to stop the U.S." Amnesty International reported that thousands of political prisoners remain in illegal detention without charge or trial. Some have been there for 15 years. India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984 in its quest for "Hindutva." It has also killed tens of thousands of Christians in Nagaland, Muslims in Kashmir, Dalits, and other peoples in this pursuit. Sooner or later, India is doomed to break up. I only hope that it does so peacefully. We must not allow another Yugoslavia to emerge in South Asia, where nuclear weapons are present.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come for our country to support freedom for all the people of South Asia. If India cannot learn to respect basic human rights as we do in this country, then it should not receive any aid or trade from the United States. It is time for the Congress to put itself on record in support of the freedom movements in Khalistan, Kashmir, Christian Nagaland, and the other nations of South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the Council of Khalistan's open letter on Kashmir into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,  
Washington, DC, June 16, 1999.

OPEN LETTER TO THE SIKH SOLDIERS AND OFFICERS

Stop "Dying Like Dogs" for the Indian Oppressors

Will You Be a Martyr or a Mercenary?  
Join the Freedom Movement to Liberate Khalistan

KHALSA JI: The Indian attack on the Kashmiri freedom fighters at Kargil again shows the reality of Hindutva. You see the death of your fellow Sikhs on a daily basis. About 60 percent of the casualties are Sikhs. When India wants to suppress a freedom movement, they send other minorities to do the dirty work, pitting minorities against each other. Hindustan will just use you and discard you. Do not let yourself be a mercenary for this divide-and-rule strategy by the Indian tyrants.

India is losing this war. Casualties are mounting. An Indian colonel admitted that the troops are "dying like dogs." A corporal is quoted as saying, "Even in war we don't have such senseless casualties." All these deaths are very tragic, but it is especially sad when Sikh soldiers give their lives for the oppressor. If a Sikh soldier must die, at least die for the Khalsa Panth. If you die for the Khalsa Panth, you will be a martyr. If you die for India, you are just a mercenary.

What are you dying for? Are you willing to die for a country that has murdered over 250,000 of our Sikh brothers and sisters since 1984? Are you willing to die for a country that desecrated the Golden Temple, shot bullet holes through the *Guru Granth Sahib*? Are you willing to die for a country that practices a policy of mass cremations against our Sikh brothers and sisters, a policy the Indian Supreme Court called "worse than a genocide"?

If you are dying anyway, come home and die for our homeland like the martyrs who were murdered in the Golden Temple attack. It is better to promote the freedom and glory of the Khalsa Panth than to promote Hindutva and the "territorial integrity" of India. When human-rights are being violated on such a massive scale, "territorial integrity" is not an issue.

The political creed of India is "Hindu, Hindui, Hindutva, Hindu Rashtra." As the former Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Balram

Jakhar, said, "If we have to kill a million Sikhs to preserve our territorial integrity, so be it." When India wants to protect its artificial borders, it is Sikhs who get killed. When we seek freedom, it is Sikhs who get killed. How can Sikhs put their lives on the line for a country like that?

You are all aware of the plight of Sikhs back home in Punjab. The Indian government has bribed Sikh policemen with cash and promotions to murder their Sikh brothers and sisters. The U.S. State Department reported that between 1992 and 1994 the Indian government paid over 41,000 cash bounties to policemen for killing Sikhs. One policeman collected a bounty for murdering a three-year-old boy. Why should Sikhs give their lives for that?

Are you aware that in 37 border villages back in Punjab, the people have evacuated because they are afraid that his war on the Kashmiri freedom fighters will expand to Punjab? As the people of Kosovo fled from their homes in fear of the Serbian government's brutality, the people of Punjab, Khalistan—your family, friends, and neighbors—are fleeing their homes in fear of the brutal Indian government. There has been a new deployment of troops to Punjab, raising fears that India will launch an attack on Pakistan from the Sialkot sector. If that happens, more Sikhs will lose their lives.

Every day in Ardas, Sikhs pray "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa," the Khalsa shall rule. Our heritage is "Khalsa Bagi Yan Badshah," the Khalsa rules or it is in rebellion. Our Gurus teach us to oppose tyranny wherever it rears its ugly head. How can Sikhs say that and then go fight for a country that denies our Sikh brothers and sisters the most basic human rights?

India's political situation is unstable and it is losing this bloody war. In desperation, it has resorted to using chemical weapons. This is a shame on India. It shows the Indian government's complete disregard for the lives of Sikhs, Muslims, and other minorities. However, the instability provides an opportunity to liberate Khalistan.

Recently, a group of Sikhs living in Pakistan called for a common front with our Kashmiri brothers to liberate both Khalistan and Kashmir. They said that now is the ideal time for such an effort. They are right. Let us make common cause with the Kashmiri freedom fighters and liberate our countries together.

Sikhs remember their martyrs and we also remember our enemies. Sikhs ended the regime of the tyrant Indira Gandhi. A brave Sikh named Delawar Singh ended the tyranny of Beant Singh. Would you rather be remembered as a brave Sikh martyr like Delawar Singh or as a traitor like K.P.S. Gill?

I call on Sikhs in the Indian armed forces, whether officers or soldiers, to stop shooting at the Kashmiri freedom fighters and join the Sikh freedom movement. Stop "dying like dogs" for the theocratic Indian state. These Kashmiri freedom fighters have the same as the goal of the Sikh Nation: to live in freedom, peace, prosperity, and dignity.

Now is the time to join the Sikh freedom movement and liberate Khalistan. You are trained soldiers. The Khalsa Panth needs your services. You will be remembered as the liberators of Khalistan. Remember Gen. Shabeg Singh who gave his life defending the sanctity of Darbar Sahib and the honor of the Sikh Nation. We must free Khalistan. Nations don't survive without political power. This is the opportune time for us. We must not let this opportunity pass.

Panth Da Sewadar,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,  
President.